

2000 Annual Report Executive Summary

La Jicarita Enterprise Community

No single economic development idea or concept creates and sustains a growing, well-balanced social and economic development program. Rather than the community searching for the one size fits all formula, the communities we represent, for the most part have begun the argues process of rethinking their existence and have strategically begun to view their place as part of a larger picture. The communities have started to regard not only their own community prosperity but also their region as a system for economic development. Communities have begun to concentrate on outcomes, goals and strategic planning for the continuation of community development. La Jicarita Enterprise Community continues to lead the charge in helping our rural communities to vision and reach their goals and highest levels of community capacity.

The year 2000 handed the region of north central New Mexico a major blow with continued drought and a barrage of forest fires that endangered every aspect of community and the delicate ecosystems they exist in. The Cerro Grande or Los Alamos National Laboratory Fire destroyed over 47,000 acres and put all surrounding communities in harms way by damaging air and water quality. Over 200 housing units were destroyed and all surrounding communities again absorbed the impacts. After all the finger pointing was over, the federal government responded by commissioning a national plan, based on a report by Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt and Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman, entitled Managing the Impact of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment. This plan calls for supporting fire fighting resources, restoring landscapes and rebuilding communities damaged by fire, the biggest opportunities presented in the plan, rest in the treatment of forests through thinning and prescribed fire to reduce the future fire risk, and working with communities to restore fire damaged landscapes and reduce fire risks. In October, President Clinton signed an appropriations bill for the Department of Interior and the USDA Forest Service to provide over \$1.6 billion next year (and up to \$12 billion by 2006) to implement a new Land Conservation Preservation and Infrastructure Improvement Program. Again, La Jicarita Enterprise Community has begun to posture our communities, who are intimately tied to the forest industries, in a position to manage and address the ecosystems surrounding their communities. This relatively small but important piece of community control lends to a systems thinking mentality that is changing community mindsets.

As we approach the sixth year of our corporate existence, no other year has been so laden with external and internal pressures. By mid year of operations we were faced with a rash of staff turnovers, a break down in internal management controls and the increasing demands set forth by our own goals and expectations. By embracing our own theory of change that sees individual achievement as a key to community revitalization, we relied on the individual strength that every employee and board member brought to the organization. Throughout the year La Jicarita Enterprise Community management team went to the bank of social capital we had built within our communities and cashed in on the mutual trust, friendships, and common values of working together for the common good of all. The investment served us well, as we were able to ban together as a staff and board to meet the challenges of an ever-changing corporate environment. The staff displayed a genuine commitment and loyalty to see itself prosper despite the troubled times and the board saw fit to guide the organization in directions congruent with the overall objectives and accountability set forth in our strategic plan. At no time during the transition did we allow the integrity of our programs to suffer. Like the phoenix rising from the ashes, La Jicarita Enterprise Community was able to prosper from the past year experiences and surfaced for the better. We continue to represent our selves and our communities in the most delicate balanced and respectful manner possible.